

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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1. THE RESULTS OF SPAIN'S FIRST DEMOCRATIC ELECTION IN
40 YEARS TRANSLATED INTO ACTION YESTERDAY AS THE CORTES
PROVISIONALLY ORGANIZED ITSELF. AS EXPECTED, THE UCD'S
FERNANDO ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA AND ANTONIO FONTAN RECEIVED
ELECTION TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE LOWER HOUSE AND THE
SENATE RESPECTIVELY. THE LOWER HOUSE ALSO ELECTED THE
UCD'S JESUS ESPERABE DE ARTEAGA AND THE PSOE'S LUIS
GOMEZ LLORENTE VICE PRESIDENTS AND THE UCD'S JOSE LUIS
NAVARRO AND FRANCISCO SOLE AND THE PSOE'S PABLO
CASTELLANO AND RAFAEL ESCUREDO AS SECRETARIES OF THE
LOWER HOUSE. THE SENATE ELECTED THE UCD'S JUAN CARLOS
GUERRA ZUNZUNEGUI AND THE PSOE'S RAMON RUBIAL AS VICE
PRESIDENTS PLUS, AS SECRETARIES UCD'S VICTOR CARRASCAL
AND JAMIE DEL BURGO AND THE PSOE'S FREDERICO CARVAJAL
AND JOAQUIN MARTINEZ BJORKMAN. THESE DESIGNATIONS ARE
PROVISIONAL BUT PRESUMABLY WILL BE RE-AFFIRMED AFTER
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THE CORTES IS FORMALLY INAUGURATED JULY 22.

2. THE LOWER HOUSE RACE WAS NOT WITHOUT MODEST DRAMA.
AN ALIANZA POPULAR OFFER OF SUPPORT IN RETURN FOR A
SECRETARY POSITION, THE AP DEPUTIES ABSTAINED LEAVING
ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA SLIGHTLY SHORT OF AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY.
(THE CATALAN AND BASQUE MODERATES VOTED FOR THE PSOE'S

GOMEZ LLORENTE.) ON THE SECOND VOTE ONLY A PLURALITY WAS REQUIRED AND ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA WON EASILTY.

3. COMMENT: SO MUCH CHANGE HAS TAKEN PLACE IN SPAIN THAT ONE BECOMES WARY OF SUPERLATIVES, BUT YESTERDAY'S CORTES SESSION MARKS (MORE THAN THE FORMAL OPENING NEXT WEEK) A WATERSHED IN SPANISH HISTORY, AN EVENT MADE ALL THE MORE REMARKABLE BY THE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH IT WAS CARRIED OUT. CORDIALITY REIGNED, AND THE PARLIAMENTARIANS WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS, ASIDE FROM A FEW TOUCHES OF NERVOUSNESS, AS IF THEY HAD BEEN AT THIS SORT OF THING FOR YEARS. TWO MEN, ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA AND RUBIAL, SYMBOLIZE THE CHANGE. THE FORMER, AS NEW LOWER HOUSE PRESIDENT, OF COURSE COMES FROM THE GOVERNING PARTY BUT BOASTS AN UNBLEMISHED RECORD OF OPPOSITION TO FRANCO AS A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT. RUBIAL, THE SOCIALIST PATRIARCH WHO HOLDS THE LARGELY SYMBOLIC POST OF PSOE PRESIDENT AS WELL HIS NEW VICE-PRESIDENCY OF THE SENATE, SPENT 19 YEARS IN FRANCO'S PRISONS. THEY ARE THE MOST MODERATE OF MEN AND SHARE A DEVOTION TO DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. EVEN ONE OF THE MORNING PRESS CARTOONS SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT THE DAY, CARICATURING THE SCENE OF ADOLFO SUAREZ SHAKING HANDS WITH LA PASIONARIA AND HAVING HER TURN TO CARRILLO TO ASK QTE A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY UNQTE. FRANCO MUST BE, AS THEY SAY, TURNING OVER IN HIS GRAVE, AND INDEED SPAIN HAS COME A LONG WAY. STABLER
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